



Montana

Department of Labor and Industry

Commissioner's Office

Michelle Robinson - Communications Director
(406)-444-1520
mirobinson@mt.gov
Fax: (406)-444-1394
P.O. Box 1728
Helena, MT 59624-1728

Shaunda Hildebrand – Director, MCRN
(406)-444-3239
shildebrand@mt.gov

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MONTANA CAREER RESOURCE NETWORK PROMOTES CAREER
AWARENESS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

HELENA, Mont. --- Montana's Career Resource Network (MCRN) is bringing career awareness to a new generation with the publication of its newest product: *Jacob & Emily Skip School: A Career Clusters Workbook*. Geared toward fifth and sixth graders, the workbook introduces students to the U.S. Department of Education's sixteen career clusters, while reinforcing the connection between school and the world of work.

"We saw a need that wasn't currently being met," said the workbook's writer and illustrator, Robert C. Marvin. "If you read the career development literature, you hear again and again that career awareness should start in elementary school, yet we didn't have any products that served that audience."

To keep students engaged in the content, *Jacob & Emily Skip School* takes the form of a story involving a set of twins who take the day off of school to explore careers with their father. Along the way, they meet and interview sixteen professionals, each of whom works within a different career cluster.

(more)

“We designed the workbook and activities so that they align with current Montana K-12 content standards,” said MCRN director Shaunda Hildebrand. “We wanted teachers to be able to implement the workbook in the classroom, so we had to make sure they could justify its inclusion in their curriculum.” The teacher’s guide includes a matrix illustrating which activities align with specific content standards.

In May, MCRN issued copies of the workbook and teacher’s guide to every elementary school in the state allowing teachers time to incorporate the activities into this fall’s lesson plans.

“[The workbook and teacher’s guide] look great and they are incredibly user-friendly,” said elementary teacher Laura Balance. “They are easy to follow for both teacher and student, and the activities look very fun and engaging.”

“I like it,” reports student Lexie, age 12. “It was something I actually enjoyed reading.”

The workbook project, developed by Montana’s Career Resource Network, was funded through Section 118 of the Carl D. Perkins Act. In the recent legislative session, congress discontinued the funding. The Montana Department of Labor and Industry has agreed to fund MCRN for the next fiscal year. Unless funding is restored publications and programs such as the *Montana Career Guide*, *Inside Edition: A Job Hunting Guide for Montanans with Criminal Records*, and *A Job Hunting Guide for Montanans with Disabilities*, *The Real Game* series and access to Montana’s Career Information System (MCIS), may be discontinued.

For more information about the publication, please contact Shaunda Hildebrand at (406) 444-3239 or toll free 800-541-3904.

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